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Forward Together...

*An
Historical Sketch
of*
INTERDENOMINATIONAL
WOMEN'S WORK
and
THE UNITED COUNCIL OF
CHURCH WOMEN



By MABEL HEAD

*The Women
who publish the tidings
are a great host...*



1950

Price 50 cents

THE YEARS OF BEGINNING

1800-1900

EARLY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY there was evident a stirring in the hearts and minds of women of this and other countries. In the churches this gave rise to women coming together for the purpose of fellowship, prayer and service. Many of these groups included women of different churches (denominations).

In 1800 Congregational and Baptist women of Boston formed the "Female Society for Missionary Purposes." In 1801 another group was formed, the "Female Society for Promoting the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge." These were activated by the report of Carey's first convert in India.

In 1809 came two organizations, "Female Missionary Society of New York" and "The Missionary and Bible Society of Methodist Church Men." The latter shortly announced that "the help of pious females would not be spurned." Others of these scattered groups were called, "Female Mite Society," "Female Cent Society," "Dorcas Society," "Little Prayer Band," etc. These names are significant—Female, not Women—Mites, not Dollars—Service, not Position—Prayer that could reach their Sisters, near and far. They were part of a larger movement led by distinguished women—Mary Lyon, campaigning for higher education, Susan B. Anthony, for women's suffrage, Frances Willard, for temperance; also the agitation against slavery, efforts for prison reform; the beginning of the Y.W.C.A., the W.C.T.U.

Was it easy then? Were pastors and Church Board leaders eager to help the women? When one group applied for some

recognition and a place in the denominational missionary program, a group of pastors refused to discuss the request—"Let them alone and it will die. We must not oppose them and we cannot approve their work." However, another pastor, who had opened his church to a group seeking to organize on a very stormy day, saw just four women, and said, "Organize, go ahead as though the room were full."


Those women, who served their church and community, prayed, gathered pennies in mite boxes, saved egg and butter money, knew that they would have to send their daughters to far-away lands, long before the church had women missionaries in mind. One young woman, after listening to a report from a China missionary, put a \$5 bill in the collection with a note, "I give myself and five dollars to the missionary cause." The personal gift was not recognized until she married a man under appointment to a foreign field. She became the mother of an outstanding missionary bishop. Another group of organized women in 1878 appeared at the General Mission Board meeting with a well qualified young woman candidate *and* the money to support her. They announced that their gift was indivisible. What could the Church Fathers do but accept the money and the female missionary? She served 31 years in educational work in China.

The very pushing against the tide, the surety that God had something for them to do, the simple ways of work, the dissemination of bits of information, letters and leaflets, began to popularize missions. The full story of these beginnings has never been written except as it is scattered amid denominational literature. It needs to be written, for it is a story of persistent faith and widening vision. It is the backlog of the fires we light today and might be called, "The Charge of the Light Brigade" or "Mites to Millions."

In the latter part of the century, denominational women's Boards began to organize. A large interdenominational committee of women was formed in 1890 and '91, to put on a program at the World's Fair, Chicago, 1893. They helped to put on the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, in New York, in 1900.

THE YEARS OF GROWING UP

1900-1944

 GREAT IMPETUS to the missionary cause and to the ecumenical movement came through the Missionary Conference held in New York in 1900. Shortly following, the first national women's interdenominational group was formed—"The Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions," which for thirty years published and promoted the use of mission study books. In 1903 a similar committee began work for the study of home missions. The two study committees later uniting into one, did excellent work and published valuable material until its work was turned over to the Missionary Education Movement in 1938.

In 1908 the Council of Women for Home Missions was organized, coordinating the work of 24 women's Boards of Home Missions in the U.S. and Canada. (Hereinafter referred to as Council.)

In 1915 the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions was formed to serve women's Foreign Missions Boards of the U.S. and Canada. (Hereinafter referred to as Federation.)

Both these missionary groups reached down to the local communities, suggesting programs and projects. However, local church women were interested in social service, law observance, race relations, none of which were special denominational tasks, so naturally women of different churches came together and Councils and Federations began to be formed. The number grew quite rapidly following the Jubilee of For-

eign Missions and follow-up meetings held across the country in 1911.

In order to unify the approach to local groups, the Federation and the Council formed, in 1920, a "Joint Committee on Women's Church and Missionary Federations." They prepared a simple, suggested Constitution and a leaflet on Program and Objectives. In 1921, The Commission on Councils and Federations of Churches (Federal Council) and the Association of Council Secretaries (employed workers, state and local), being much aware of these growing women's societies, made a survey to see what place women had in Councils and Federations, and what societies of women were doing. Two states and twenty-four cities responded. The answers are revealing. While no place indicated that women could not be elected to Church Boards and Committees, eight said they never had been, eight that few women were used, six reported women's organizations (one autonomous). These reports made by Council and Federation Secretaries showed that women were used for visiting, social service, survey of motion pictures, raising money, civic action, but most of them thought organization of women's groups neither essential nor advisable. Some women from the Federation and the Council were present when this survey was discussed. The following policy was accepted:

1. Where Church Federations or Councils exist, each member church shall be represented by the pastor, a layman and a laywoman, the last named to be chosen by the combined vote of the women's missionary organizations of the church.
2. That there should be an autonomous department made up of women members which shall be related to the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions, and the Council of Women for Home Missions organized according to their suggested Constitution. This department shall have full charge of interdenominational study work, inspirational meetings and so forth, as outlined by the Federation and the Council.

3. Where no Church Federation or Council exists, the women shall be encouraged to organize as noted in #2, and hold themselves ready to affiliate when a Federation or Council of Churches comes into existence.
4. In all cases, whatever the form of the organization, the local group of women shall be related by membership and contributions to the national organizations (Federation and Council).

In 1924, the Association of Council Secretaries and the Federal Council of Churches called the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions and the Council of Women for Home Missions and representatives of local interdenominational groups of women to a meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to discuss women's work. No woman appeared on that program, but some did take part in discussion. The conference urged a greater flexibility in missionary programs, relating activities of social welfare to the church, and a study of the non-church community agencies by the women's societies. Annual meetings of these five groups were held until 1929. At the third annual meeting the President of the Council presided and the President of the Federation appeared on the program.

The following action was taken in 1927:

"The coming together in conference for three successive years reveals the fact that church women throughout America are recognizing the need for some central interdenominational organization through which the work of local interdenominational Groups of Church Women may be correlated, systematized and promoted. We recommend that the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions and the Council of Women for Home Missions give careful consideration to the strongly expressed need for the services of a woman secretary to counsel with local groups."

This was referred to the Federation and the Council, both of which approved in principle, provided there should be a Guiding Group to insure the proper continued attention to missionary interests.

At Buffalo, New York, in 1928, the Guiding Group was named and its duties outlined:

Plan for local interdenominational church women's groups.

Unify and enlarge programs.

Counsel and advise new organizations.

Cooperate with the Federal Council and Association of Council Secretaries.

It was also agreed to release local groups from membership dues paid to the Federation and Council in order to give support to the unified and enlarged work. It was hoped that dues and contributions would make possible a secretary and an office.

So notable was this action of 1928, that the National Broadcasting Company asked that one of the most active women, Mrs. John Ferguson, President of the Council of Women for Home Missions, speak over the air on, "An Achievement in Cooperation by Church Women of America."

The Guiding Group took the name of "The National Commission of Protestant Church Women," opened an office at 1123 Broadway, New York, employed a General Secretary and an office worker. The National Commission was launched by a series of area, state and large city meetings. The first annual convention was held in Boston in 1929.

In Boston, more stress was laid on the work done and needs of local communities than on missions. The representatives of local groups went off on their own and organized, taking the name, "The National Council of Federated Church Women". They elected officers and proposed a Relationship Committee to work out correlation between the three groups. This action was to be approved by the Federation and Council before being made public, but the enthusiasm was too great and it was sent out to 1,300 groups (mostly World Day of Prayer) across the country as a "fait accompli." The Federation and the Council were generous though embarrassed. They recognized the new organization as the accredited channel through which they would reach local groups; gave some financial

support and appointed their representatives on the Relations Committee. The former National Commission of Protestant Church Women went out of existence in 1930.

At the Boston meeting it was voted to ask for affiliation with the Federal Council. No direct affiliation was ever granted, though until 1941 the President of the National Council of Federated Church Women was a member of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council.

The Relations Committee worked out a policy of approach to local groups. "Home Missions and education in that field shall be the responsibility of the Council of Women for Home Missions;" "Foreign Missions and education in that field, the responsibility of the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions;" "Spiritual Life, the Christian Home, Religious Education, Legislation and Law Observance, Drama and Motion Pictures, International Relations and Peace, the responsibility of the National Council of Federated Church Women."

The Relations Committee prepared suggested programs for local groups and were continually trying to discover the work that should be done together. Joint committees were appointed for World Day of Prayer, Conferences and Schools of Missions, and International Relations and Peace. This Committee was later known as the Cooperative Committee of the Council of Women for Home Missions, the National Council of Federated Church Women and the Women's Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference. In 1937 it became the National Committee of Church Women.

In 1931, the idea of having a Dedication Day on or near Ascension Sunday was adopted by the National Council of Federated Church Women. This was the beginning of special May meetings and emphasized fellowship and personal dedication. Early, the idea of giving for the support of the Council was introduced and for several years a "Shower of Dollars" was reported on that day.

In 1935, a Quarterly News Bulletin was started—the forerunner of *The Church Woman*. Much time during these years was occupied in working out relationships, securing support,

widening and deepening the program, until in 1936 the United Christian Adult Movement was launched in a Conference of the International Council of Religious Education at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and the National Council of Federated Church Women became one of its constituent agencies, adopting its Seven Areas of work:

1. The Bible in Life
2. Personal Faith and Experience
3. Christian Family Life
4. Church Life and Outreach
5. Community Issues
6. Major Social Problems
7. World Relations

These areas seemed to cover much of the program already carried under other headings and were more in line with general church programs.

The Cooperative Committee in 1936 urged that the Field Committee started by the Federal Council should be made sufficiently representative to coordinate all field programs and activities in which two or more national agencies were concerned, and to unify approaches to and contacts with interdenominational field agencies.

In 1938, the word "Federated" was dropped and the organization became the National Council of Church Women. Also in this same year, *The Church Woman* became the joint publication of the three groups.

During these years, the program in race relations was carried on with that department of the Federal Council; the World Relations program with the Cause and Cure of War Conference, the National Peace Conference and the Dept. of International Justice and Good Will of the Federal Council. The missionary program was carried through the relationship with the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Women's Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference.

1939 is a memorable year. The Boards of the three national interdenominational church women's organizations, the Na-

tional Council of Church Women, the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Women's Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference met for the first time at Red Bank, New Jersey, in May, and recommended: "The National Committee of Church Women gratefully recognizes the growth and development of a sense of unity among church women fostered through the years by these organizations and through the achievements of the National Committee of Church Women. This group is convinced that the time has come to proceed to the development of one interdenominational organization of church women which would conserve the values and achievements of the three organizations and carry forward the work assigned to the National Committee of Church Women. This suggested organization should also have as an objective the closer integration of women in the total program and life of the church."

After two years of careful study and planning, with many meetings to discuss plans and report progress, a call was made to the Constituting Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, December 11, 1941. There the three bodies united and formed the United Council of Church Women, adopted a Constitution and By Laws, and a simple plan of work, to carry out the Purpose: "The purpose shall be to unite church women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, through a program looking to their integration in the total life and work of the church and to the building of a world community."

Eighty-five delegates came to Atlantic City from every part of the country, with many misgivings. Cooperation has not always been easy—would union be more difficult, or would it be worth the cost? Faced by a world at war, the spirit of unity grew as the days passed until, in faith and hope, they could send out to the women of the Church a plan for united work and a call to renewed consecration and dedication.

THE YEARS OF UNION

1942-1950

"This is a flame the Lord hath kindled and no man can extinguish it."

—THOMAS NUMILK

1942

The year was largely given to getting the new organization set up and functioning; opening an office at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, continuing committee work, adding to the program of the Seven Areas, "War Services" and "Religious Ministry to Women in Service."

This was the year of participation in the National Conference on a Just and Durable Peace, at Delaware, Ohio. Study along this line had a real place in Council programs, and has continued through the years.

Tsui-Chen Kuan, exchange Counselor on Home and Family Life, Secretary of the National Christian Council of China, spent several months holding meetings in 37 states—20 cities. This work extended into 1943, especially helping local women to meet their problems.

A gift of \$5,000 was received and placed in a Revolving Fund (Elise Weyerhauser Hill) which greatly eased the strain of heavy seasonal outlay, such as printing and mailing World Day of Prayer materials.

Four women were appointed to serve on the committee seeking closer cooperation among interdenominational agencies. This planning brought about the National Council of Churches in 1950.

Councils were urged to set up plans to create a friendly attitude toward Japanese-Americans and to find schools and colleges to accept them.

The President of the U. S. was urged to appoint women at the Peace Conference. (Miss Mary E. Woolley was appointed later and served.)

Appointed six area vice-presidents to organize and direct Councils in their areas.

Established relations with Women's National Radio Committee.

Program was incorporated in a leaflet *Forward Together*.

Decided to take an Offering at the May Luncheon (half to UCCW—half to Local).

The World Day of Prayer for the first time under the direction of the UCCW had an offering of \$84,820.

A special Field Worker was employed.

The most significant action of the year was the employment of an Executive Secretary—Mrs. Ruth Mougey Worrell, who guided the organization for six years, 1942-48. Her vision, enthusiasm, great devotion and hard work are largely responsible for the rapid growth of the United Council of Church Women. Many "rise up and call her blessed."

1943

Called special meeting of denominational leaders to consider relationships and Program. The fifteen denominations represented, urged a day for emphasis on Christian World Order each November. Suggested the name WORLD COMMUNITY DAY and the topic, "The Price of Enduring Peace." Agreed to push this in their groups and urge women in every communion to help.

Voted to cooperate fully with National Committee on Religious Ministry to Women in Armed Services.

Recommended study of Six Pillars of Peace growing out of the Delaware Conference; repeal of the Oriental Exclusion Act; child feeding in Europe.

State Council Presidents made members of the National Board.

Formed a Committee on Social, Industrial and Race Relations to be made up of all racial groups to promote higher standards of living, citizenship and social justice.

First Associate Secretary added to the Staff.

The World Community Day Program, built to consider the Price of Enduring Peace, sent out two questions to be voted upon. One hundred thousand ballots were sent to 1,594 groups. Returns came from 1,350 communities in 46 states, and showed that women voted 58 to 1 in favor of U. S. participation in some form of world organization to build a new world order; and 42 to 1 were willing to continue rationing and other war-time restrictions if necessary to win the peace. Ballots were returned to states and forwarded by them to Congressmen.

1944

The Church Woman was moved from Chicago to New York.

Decided to take an Offering for relief on World Community Day.

Joined with the Federal Council of Churches in a program of education on the World Council of Churches, and approved Margaret Applegarth as field worker, offering office space in the UCCW.

Radio message to women of the world—Mrs. Leslie Swain and Miss Amy Welcher, President of UCCW.

MAY FELLOWSHIP DAY (no longer May Luncheon) used the topic "Children and Youth; Leaders of Tomorrow."

World Day of Prayer program prepared by 150 Repatriates pooling their concerns.

Set up a Coordinating Committee on Public Affairs to which work of Joint Congressional Committee in Washington would be related. Urged a similar Committee in states to follow state legislation.

Endorsed aims and methods of the White House Conference on "How Women May Share in Post-War Policy," also

the Social Protection Program of the Federal Security Agency. Urged the government to set up no plan for peace-time conscription.

Urged bundles of clothing be sent to Philippines.

Approved a Commission to study segregation as it affects the lives of all in our local communities. Agreed to work for a Fair Employment Practices Commission.

Great preparation was made for the second biennial Assembly of the UCCW in Columbus, Ohio. Across the country commissions spent many months in study and research and reported to the Assembly on

A Realistic View of Christian Missions at Home and Abroad after WarCincinnati

The Church in Europe, including the Axis and Occupied CountriesIndianapolis

The Latest Word from the World Council of Churches and the Need for an Ecumenical Committee in every CouncilRochester

Some Christian Women Leaders in Other Lands.....Nebraska

Early Beginnings of the UCCW and Today's Task in United WorkTexas

A Critical Study of Prejudice—its Cause and Cure.....Boston

Our Profession versus our BehaviorDetroit

Social Community Problems Arising out of the War SituationMinneapolis

World Order and PeaceCalifornia

A World View of the Color Problem.....Chicago

Programleaflet for the Year—"Forward Together Through Action."

Urged the President of the U. S. to appoint a Commission from the Senate, House, Industry, Education, and the Church, to investigate problems of Security before taking action on Universal Military Training. (Such a Commission was appointed and reported in the document called "President's Report.")

1945

Associate Secretary for Administration and Finance added to the Staff.

UCCW incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

Publicity Division (now Public Relations) established.

UCCW became Charter Member of Protestant Film Commission.

Grant received from the Julius Rosenwald Fund—\$20,000 for a period of three years, to carry on work in Christian Social Relations. Miss Louise Young, Professor of Sociology at Scarrett College, Nashville, Tennessee, released one year to direct the work. Two emphases chosen—(1) Child Welfare, (2) Study of Segregation. Regional and area conferences planned.

Rejoiced in the adoption of a United Nations Charter at San Francisco. Agreed to promote wide distribution of the Charter, the sending of many letters to President and Senators urging prompt ratification, and pledged church women to help develop attitudes necessary to support international machinery.

Urged support of U. N. Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and Church Committee for Overseas Relief. Sent sheets, pillow cases, towels and blankets to 2,000 ministers' families in Holland, Belgium, France, Italy.

National Denominational Presidents made members of the Board of the UCCW.

Special Message sent to Women of Japan.

A significant Board meeting was held in Washington with fairly successful efforts to overcome discrimination. Actions taken included:

Support of measures for Maternal Child Health.

Federal Aid to Education—Full citizenship rights.

Fair Employment Practices and decent minimum wage.

Asked 25 Councils to study segregation in their own areas.

Began study on work for Civilian Control of Atomic Energy.

Local Councils urged to give special attention to needs of Japanese-Americans as they re-settle; to housing for industrial workers, especially those from minority groups; to undergirding program of Christian ministry in migrant camps.

1946

Pledged support of the Study of Life and Work of Women in the Churches, undertaken by the World Council of Churches, and aid in the dissemination of results of the study.

Name of Committee on International Justice and Good Will changed to Christian World Relations.

Person named at request of Department of State as liaison representative at the United Nations, known as the Official Observer. This person also to aid in field work—support to come from World Community Day Offering. This contact has helped church women to know the work of the United Nations, to study and discuss its problems, to act in its behalf, and to influence their own country to fulfill its obligation as a Member Nation. This new relationship has widened the opportunity for Christians to share in world-wide political, social and economic problems.

Voted to join Protestant Radio Commission as soon as money could be found.

Adopted the Seal which appears on this booklet. Second staff member added to Christian Social Relations Department, which department carried out a study on "World Charter and Your Community." Questions were sent to 1,174 groups and 318 replied. Thirty returns came from Councils studying segregation.

Rosenwald Fund began a Study of Segregation in the Nation's Capital, the report of which has been much used. UCCW urged prompt and complete investigation of the riot in Columbia, Tennessee.

Began cooperation with Churchmen's Seminars on Legislation.

Public Affairs Committee spent much time on the subject of Atomic Energy and helped to set up a National Commission on Atomic Information.

A Staff member given three months' leave of absence to represent the UCCW at the First West Central Africa Regional Conference, and in visiting Missions in some ten different territories of West Africa.

The UCCW National Assembly, held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was marked by the attendance of representatives from many countries—England, Wales, Holland, Germany, India, China, Korea, Denmark, Africa.

The theme, "Until We All Attain Unto The Unity of Faith," was visualized in many parts of the program.

Christian Social Relations Department reported legislative seminars in several states. There was general agreement that more attention should be given by Councils to education on tasks of Christian citizenship.

Film forums each afternoon and demonstrations in theaters, which opened early to show special pictures, attested to the value of the Film Committee authorized two years before.

A message was sent to Senator Vandenberg from this meeting in his home town commending him for his fine bipartisan cooperation in foreign affairs.

From the Findings: "For one hundred years, missionaries have been holding the world together. The groups of Christians have held together during the dislocations of war. Today calls for new methods—evangelism by radio—penetration of isolated places by plane, exchange visits by Christians of all nations. As the U. S. takes her place of leadership, the best contribution she can make is to build a truly Christian nation."

One of the leaders of the Church—a man—who sat through the Assembly, said, "Here is a nation-wide practice of in-

terracial integration—a magnificent exhibit of world-wide inclusiveness. Here is the atmosphere of the World Church personified by the presence of a score of nations, races, continents. This Assembly marks the definite emergence of maximum inclusiveness of women's work in the Church—Ladies' Aid, Missionary Society, Temperance Society, Bible classes, Study Groups, Peace Committee, Race Relations, Social Action, Christian Family Life, etc. etc., all welded into one inclusive program wide as the planet."

1947

Valuable booklet prepared by Department of Christian Social Relations, "For Souls that Greatly Dare."

UCCW became Charter member of the Protestant Radio Commission.

A Leadership Training Division established.

Sponsored, along with several other organizations, the National Broadcasting Company's series fostering better home relations and international understanding, "Home Is What You Make It."

A special committee made a study of the Bill of Human Rights at suggestion of the State Department and forwarded results of that study to the U. S. Mission to the United Nations.

Urged a woman secretary be added to the World Council of Churches. (Miss Sarah Chakko, of India, was called to this position in 1949.)

The Christian Social Relations Department was asked to administer a fund of \$5,000 to be used for scholarships for those training for leadership in the social relations field.

Shared in the annual International Workshop in Audio-Visual Aids.

State Councils were asked to appoint Motion Picture Chairmen. Most Councils already had Chairmen for Christian So-

cial, and Christian World, Relations, World Day of Prayer, and Radio.

Mrs. Ruth Mougey Worrell, the Executive Secretary, spent two months in Europe and brought back vivid pictures of conditions in many war-torn areas.

1948

The Christian Social Relations Department sent out an Opinion Poll:

Do you believe the school system in your community gives justice to all children?

Do you believe the housing code gives justice to all children?

Should members of churches work for equality of opportunity for all children?

Should the public be taxed to provide better health services for all children?

Answers received were a guide in forming programs.

The UCCW National Assembly was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A cable was sent to the U. S. Delegation at the United Nations General Assembly, in Paris, urging adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and the Convention declaring Genocide a crime under international law.

Significant experiments tried in local areas were reported.

The topics covered a wide range—Reading the News, Providing Good Movies and Recreation, Christian Help in Migrant Camps, Radio and Television, Inter-cultural and Race Relations, Influencing type and use of films, “U.N. and You” in St. Louis, Observance of World Day of Prayer in foreign countries, Inter-church Cooperation in a Rural Community.

The World Community Day Committee had sought to advance the cause of peace by asking women to sign Commitment cards indicating support of the World Church, United Nations and Human Rights, by study, prayer and action. About one million cards were distributed and, during the Assembly, in a simple ceremony, about 400,000 cards were given to State Presidents for cultivation. This was very effective as it followed a dramatic presentation of "The Bomb that Fell on America."

The retirement of Mrs. Ruth Mougey Worrell was announced and the new Executive Secretary, Mrs. William Murdoch MacLeod, introduced.

1949

The new Executive Secretary, Mrs. Wm. Murdoch MacLeod, went to Chichester, England, to help in the formation of the Commission on Women's Work of the World Council of Churches.

A Secretary for World Missions of the Church and one for Christian World Relations were added to the Staff, also a new Secretary for Administration and Finance.

State Councils were asked to add a committee to promote World Missions.

A Pension Plan for employees was adopted.

Three states undertook experiments in Leadership Training.

The World Day of Prayer was mentioned on 25 radio and television programs, thus reaching thousands who might not attend services.

Recommended to Local Councils the forming of an Inter-Faith Committee, to extend fellowship between Jewish, Catholic, and our Protestant-evangelical groups; also recommended that more emphasis be put on programs for employed women.

A letter was sent to Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations, expressing gratification that a room for meditation and prayer will be provided in the new UN headquarters.

Mrs. Harper Sibley, UCCW President, brought an expression of appreciation from the Empress of Japan for the friendly attitude of American women, also thanks from the children of Japan for food and clothing.

A most important Board meeting was held in Los Angeles. It was preceded by a series of Seminars held in twenty states west of the Mississippi River, by teams made up of Board members from east of the Mississippi River, and a few Staff members. Thirty-eight meetings were held, using the topic, "Women in the Ecumenical Church." These meetings were practical discussions of organization, program, promotion, commitment—a great demonstration of working together. The fellowship of Board members with hundreds of local women was a large part of the value of these seminars.

After much prayer and careful evaluation, the Board voted "that the UCCW join with the other national interdenominational organizations in constituting the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A." For, 73 — Against, 3.

Later in the meeting, a local Council woman proposed an act of thanksgiving for the growth of the ecumenical movement and the closer relation of agencies that would be in the National Council. This was received with great enthusiasm and approved after much discussion. It was agreed to call upon women who believed in the growing unity of Christians, to enroll, stand and be counted, and contribute one dollar to assure the on-going work of women in the National Assembly and in the World Council of Churches. This was later called "The Ecumenical Register." The faith of the women who heard the call in Los Angeles envisaged one million women to be registered in the year before the UCCW Assembly in Cincinnati, Ohio, November, 1950, where the Roll would be presented with special ceremony.

Promotion Through SPECIAL DAYS

Not only do years stand out in this history, but days, as well. One unique way of working together is the observance of three special Days, each having a definite purpose.

World Day of Prayer

First, and oldest, is the World Day of Prayer. Like the women's societies, it grew from a call sent out by women of prayer.

In 1869 a few Methodist women in Boston organized a society with the slogan, "Two cents a week and a Prayer." By the end of the year, they sent out their first missionaries, Isabella Thoburn and Dr. Clara Swain, to India.

In 1887 the President of the Women's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church sent a call to women of every Presbyterian Church to come together at a certain hour to pray for the Church's work in this country. (This date has often been given as the beginning of the W. D. P.)

In 1890 two strong Baptist women named a day for united prayer for missions.

In 1919, at the call of the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions, a day of prayer for all missions was observed. The next year Canada joined the women of America and the first Friday in Lent was the regular date chosen.

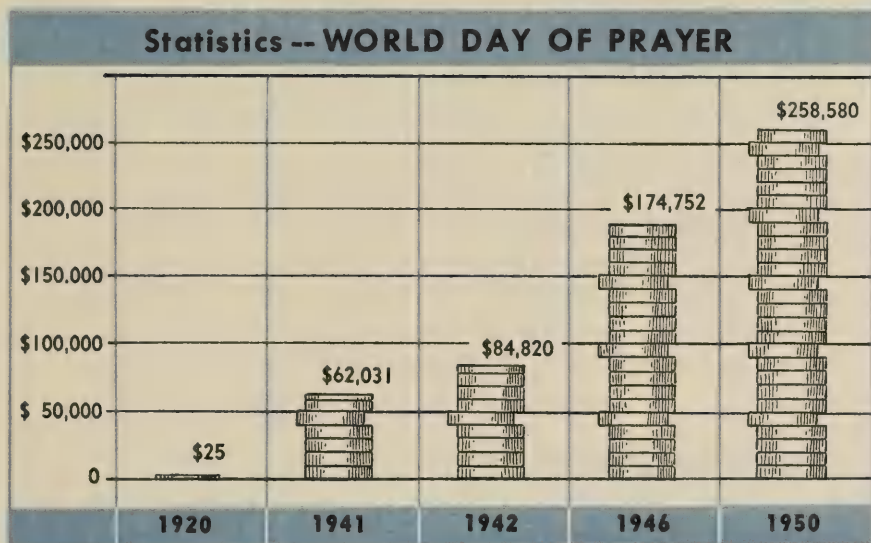
In 1927 it became, for the first time, THE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER. Under the leadership of missionaries and church leaders, little bands of women in many countries came together to pray. By 1936, fifty countries had joined, then more and more, until in 1950 there were ninety-one. Truly, on that Day, prayer girdles the globe. Beginning at dawn over the Fiji Islands, it moves hour after hour until the circle is complete.

It is a *world* day in part, because women of different countries* prepare the program each year. Some translate it into the language of their country, so that together, with song and praise and prayer, they may join with their sisters in many lands.

In 1920 some money was given quite voluntarily, only \$25, but it started the idea among women in the U. S. churches that an offering for support of union missionary enterprises added zest to the Day. That offering has grown to \$258,580, equally divided, to Home and Foreign projects.

- *1930 Korean
- 1931 Canadian
- 1932 Indian
- 1933 Chinese
- 1934 South African
- 1935 Hollander
- 1936 Chilean
- 1937 English woman living in Africa
- 1938 New Zealander
- 1939 Presbyterian women of U.S.A.
- 1940 Group of English women
- 1941 International Committee in Shanghai
- 1942 Three—German, French and American missionaries from China
- 1943 American Interracial Committee
- 1944 150 Repatriates pooling their concerns
- 1945 Committee from England, Wales, Ireland
- 1946 English woman of Rhodesia, Africa
- 1947 Indian women in Allahabad
- 1948 3 American women from W.D.P. Committee
- 1949 Japanese
- 1950 German

The program is edited by the Committee and sent to press. It is distributed to all parts of the world by the Foreign Missions Conference where it is translated and adapted to use on the field. Foreign Mission Boards send it to their missionaries. The United Council of Church Women sends out posters, handbook, the call to prayer for the Day to leaders in this country.



May Fellowship Day

A special observance in May, near to Ascension Day, was started by the National Council of Federated Church Women and called Dedication Day (1931). Its purpose was to foster closer fellowship among Christian women. Soon the idea of using it for support of Council work was carried out by a Shower of Dollars, usually brought on Dedication Day.

In 1933 the Council of Women for Home Missions decided to have a May Luncheon Party in New York City. It was so

successful that it was repeated for three years and then extended to other places. From 1938 to 1941, the two May events were combined and represented all three interdenominational groups, and was promoted by the National Committee of Church Women. In 1939 Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt gave a proclamation for the day. Since 1941, it has been directed by the United Council of Church Women, under the name, **MAY FELLOWSHIP DAY**.

The themes used give some idea of the importance and value of the program. "Frontiers in Christian Social Order"—"Union With Christ"—"What Do Ye More Than Others?"—"Can Christians Hold the World Together?"—"With Malice Toward None, With Charity for All"—"Children and Youth-Leaders of Tomorrow"—"Our Town"—"The Fabric of Fellowship"—"Every Child My Child, in the Fabric of Fellowship"—"God's Design for Children"—"Our Daily Bread." Charts, posters and a Fact Booklet have enriched this program. The money given on this day has been divided among Local and State Councils and the United Council.

World Community Day

While the idea of working for peace was in the minds of all those at the 1941 Constituting Convention, it was a group of denominational presidents meeting with leaders of the UCCW in 1942, who urged another day—**WORLD COMMUNITY DAY**—dedicated to building a world community and establishing peace, agreeing to urge denominational support in its promotion.

This Day was first observed in 1943—the theme being, "The Price of Enduring Peace." One hundred thousand ballots were sent out asking (1) if women were willing to urge our government to join a world organization for the purpose of insuring a just and durable peace, and share its expense and other responsibilities. Answers came from 1,594 communities—58 to 1—Yes; asking (2) if women were willing to have

rationing continued after the war, if necessary, to relieve distress, restore order, and help other nations to recover. Answers received were 49 to 1—Yes.

1944 *theme*—"The Price of Enduring Peace," emphasizing economic problems and relief.

1945 *theme*—"The World Charter—How Make It Live?" One million diapers and thousands of layettes were sent overseas.

1946 *theme*—"World Community—How Achieve It?" "World Church—Woman's Part In It." A half million Kiddie Kits for children under six years sent overseas.

1947 *theme*—"The World Is My Community" and "UNESCO." A half million boxes of school supplies and bundles of clothing for children aged six to twelve sent overseas.

1948 *theme*—"Peace Is Possible." A half million Pack-A-Towel packages for teen-agers sent overseas.

1949 *theme*—"Peace Is My Responsibility." A half million packages of "Pieces for Peace" sent overseas to women, with sewing materials for their use.

1950 *theme*—"Love Thy Neighbor." Knitted materials for older women.

(This is printed too early for a report)

The money offering begun in 1945 has been divided with Church World Service and the half retained by the UCCW has been used for peace education, and liaison with the United Nations, beginning in 1946.

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The UCCW is a lay woman's movement.
- The UCCW works through State Councils to expand and develop a fellowship that will carry a unified program among church women in local places.
- The UCCW nor any State Council could exist without local groups. Strength lies in the combined strength of local councils whose strength lies in the combined strength of women in each local church.
- The UCCW seeks simplicity of organization, maximum of co-operation, minimum of duplication.
- The UCCW will not meet where all its members cannot be received on an equal basis—no discrimination because of race or color.
- The UCCW seeks to further the world mission of the church and to establish peace with justice.
- The UCCW seeks to deepen spiritual life and experience; to motivate Christian expression and action; to build a Christian community, nation, and world; to integrate the work of women into the total life and work of the church.
- The UCCW considers no sacrifice too great to further the ecumenical movement.

A FEW UNIQUE FACTS

The UCCW has had but two Presidents—Miss Amy Ogden Welcher, 1941-44, gave unstintedly of her time and effort in the days when there was no Staff except an Office Secretary. She attended meetings, laying out ways of cooperation, making the new organization known and understood. Correspondence and business matters had to be done in her home as much as in the office. She shaped the new organization with her own hands and mind, but with the loyal support of many women who had been workers in the three organizations, and new ones attracted by the idea of unity. A woman of God, she led in spiritual things.

Mrs. Harper Sibley, 1944-50, has been untiring in her work, traveling, speaking, counseling that Christian women might have the chance to fully exercise their power in this challenging time. She has, during her Presidency, been the American Mother, 1945. She was at the San Francisco Conference where the United Nations was born, at Amsterdam, where the World Council of Churches was born, and she went to Germany, at the request of the U.S. Government, for three months, to help church women there. She also visited Japan as a Christian emissary. She came back from each trip to take up the home work with new zest and give new strength and vision and courage to the UCCW. She radiates a truly ecumenical faith and experience.

The UCCW has had but two Executive Secretaries—Mrs. Ruth Mougey Worrell served, 1942-48. Her belief in Church women and their possibilities was contagious. She was well schooled in the missionary work of the Church, in social and community problems, and in the techniques of organization.

Mrs. William Murdoch MacLeod came in 1948 and is busy making history. Her sense of organization, clear thinking about relationships, understanding of denominational procedures, and devotion to the Church, have been great assets in leading women into a new union in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

STATE and LOCAL COUNCILS of CHURCH WOMEN



*Plus Hawaii and District of Columbia

And Now...

we move into the

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

*as the General Department of United Church Women,
and begin the writing of a new Chapter of
women and men working together.*

God keep us from pettiness, fear and suspicion. Create in us the will to work together that His way may more perfectly prevail in us and in our world; that His Kingdom may come on earth as it is in Heaven.

